



IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 28, 2014

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STEM Learning in Libraries Summit to Take Place on Oct. 30

First-ever summit in Colorado provides collaboration opportunities for STEM organizations and public libraries

BOULDER and THORNTON, Colo.—October 28, 2014—The Space Science Institute’s National Center for Interactive Learning (NCIL), Colorado State Library, Informal Learning Experiences (ILE) and Anythink are teaming up to host the first STEM Learning in Colorado Libraries Summit. The summit, which takes place at Anythink Wright Farms on Thursday, Oct. 30 from 10 am-1 pm, is an excellent opportunity to bring representatives from Colorado public libraries and STEM organizations together to celebrate the high-quality STEM programming and resources that public libraries currently offer. Participating organizations will also have the chance to discuss methods for increased collaboration for future STEM opportunities in Colorado’s public libraries.

“We are delighted to host the STEM Learning in Libraries Summit,” says Anythink Director Pam Sandlian Smith. “We have been collaborating with STEM experts, and our staff are in the midst of creating STEM learning opportunities for our community.”

Robert Mac West, president of ILE, points out that “partnerships between libraries and STEM organizations facilitate broad public access to incredible science research and education resources, and provide scientists and engineers with direct contact to a broad public.”

Libraries across the country have been reimagining their community role and leveraging resources and public trust to strengthen community-based learning and foster critical thinking, problem solving and engagement in STEM. Libraries have become the “public square” by providing a place where members of a community can gather for information, education programming and policy discussions. Libraries across Colorado and the country also offer a number of exciting STEM programs and activities, such as Science Saturdays, Robot Races, makerspaces, hands-on workshops and STEM exhibitions.

Paul Dusenbery, Director of NCIL and Project Director for the [STAR Library Education Network](#) is sponsoring the Summit in collaboration with Anythink. Dusenbery has been working with public libraries across the country to develop effective STEM education programs. Building the

capacity of public libraries and library staff to deliver engaging, inspirational and educational STEM programs has the potential to transform the STEM education landscape across the country. What started in libraries several years ago as independent experiments in STEM programming has become a national STEM movement. This movement is now taking root in Colorado.

“The partnerships that develop from this summit will go far to provide the state’s children and teens with additional fun, enriching and free STEM programming and resources at public libraries,” says Colorado State Library Youth & Family Services Consultant Beth Crist.

The following organizations will be participating in the summit.

Public Libraries:

Anythink Libraries
Aurora Public Library
Berthoud Community Library District
Broomfield/Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library
Colorado State Library
Denver Public Library
Garfield County Public Library District
High Plains Library District
Louisville Public Library
Park County Public Library
Pikes Peak Library District

STEM Organizations:

Colorado State University/CoCoRaHS
Colorado Technology Association
Cornerstones of Science
Denver Museum of Nature & Science
Denver Zoo
Fort Collins Museum of Discovery
Informal Learning Experiences
National Center for Interactive Learning/Space Science Institute
University Corporation for Atmospheric Research
University of Colorado/Science Discovery
WOW Children’s Museum

About the National Center for Interactive Learning

The Space Science Institute’s *National Center for Interactive Learning* (NCIL) is dedicated to expanding the understanding and participation of families, youth, teachers, and citizens in science and technology (www.nc4il.org). We foster collaboration between STEM professionals and educators to bring the wonder of science and engineering directly to people. Our programs span a range of audience needs and delivery methods, including traveling museum and public library exhibitions; award-winning educational films, videos, and websites; hands-on teaching resources and activities; and educator workshops. Our programs are designed to be accessible to all, and to inspire the next generation of STEM innovators. More than 450,000 people visit our traveling exhibits every year and more than 750,000 use our educational websites. Our programs have a positive impact on rural and urban communities nationwide and reach underserved audiences with inspirational, fun, and innovative STEM activities.

About Anythink™

Anythink is a new style of library – a place of unlimited imagination, where play inspires creativity and lifelong learning. Rangeview Library District serves the residents of Adams County with seven Anythink libraries and [Anythink in Motion](#) – the district’s mobile library – and is one of the recipients of the 2010 National Medal of Museum and Library Service from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. For more information, go to anythinklibraries.org.